



Rhode Island Orchids

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THERE ARE forty species of orchids which grow in the wild in Rhode Island. All are natives except for *Epipactis helleborine*. At least eight of these native orchids have not been seen in recent years: *Galearis spectabilis*, *Isotria medeoloides*, *Liparis liliifolia*, *Listera cordata*, *Malaxis bayardii*, *Platanthera hookeri*, *Platanthera macrophylla*, and *Platanthera orbiculata*. Some orchids such as Green Adder's-mouth are small, inconspicuous and easily overlooked. Others, such as Pink and Yellow Lady's-slippers are showy and more easily noticed.

Orchid habitat varies with species. Some species such as *Malaxis* usually grow in bogs or swamps while *Spiranthes vernalis* is found in dry fields. *Platanthera lacera* can be found in swamps and also in dry fields.

RI orchids bloom from early May into October and sometimes into November. The earliest species to bloom in RI is *Corallorhiza trifida* and the last is *C. odontorhiza*.

The information on Rhode Island Orchids come from several sources. The Blooming Dates are based on a list developed by Gil George. They include information on Massachusetts blooming times and data given to Gil by Richard Champlin. Champlin also had information from John Hudson, an earlier wild plant person. The county and status information is from Rick Enser's Rare Plants of RI and, for orchids not on the Rare Plant List, the status is taken from Gil George's Rhode Island Botanical Survey Check List, published in 1999. Francis Underwood provided habitat information and made sure the nomenclature was up-to-date.

The plant status codes are explained on pages 42-43 of this article.



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

Botanical Name: **Arethusa bulbosa L.**
Common Name: *Arethusa, Swamp-pink, Dragon's Mouth*
Habitat: sphagnum bogs
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence; Kent; Washington
Number of RI sites: 4

Blooming Dates

RI: 5/28
MA: (5/16) 5/24 - 7/1
Seymour's: 5/28 - 7/14
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/22 - 6/7



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

Botanical Name: **Calopogon tuberosus (L.) BSP**
Common Name: *Grass-pink, Swamp-pink*
Habitat: wet fields and bogs
State Status: SC
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence; Kent; Washington
Number of RI sites: 9

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 6/17 - 8/11
Seymour's: 6/25 - 7/27
Hudson/Champlin's: 6/18 - 8/4



Photo credit: kbarton



Photo credit: Anne Wagner

Botanical Name: **Corallorhiza maculata Raf.**
 Common Name: *Spotted Coral-root*
 Habitat: mixed hardwoods and pine
 State Status: SC
 Federal Status: —
 Counties found in: Providence; Kent
 Number of RI sites: 7

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/27, 8/23
 MA: 6/18 - 26, 7/4 - 9/8, 9/22 - 10/4
 Seymour's: 7/5 - 8/16
 Hudson/Champlin's: 7/7 - 8/28



Photo credits: kbarton

Botanical Name: **Corallorhiza odontorhiza**
Common Name: *Late or Autumn Coral-root*
Habitat: rich woods
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 1

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 8/17- 10/13 (10/21)
Seymour's: 9/4 - 29
Hudson/Champlin's: 9/1 - 15



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

6

Botanical Name: **Corallorhiza trifida Chatelain**
Common Name: *Early, Pale, or Northern Coral-root*
Habitat: swamps and wet woods
State Status: SC
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence; Kent
Number of RI sites: 4

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 5/8 - 6/10
Seymour's: 5/26 - 7/14
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/11 - 5/27



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

Botanical Name: **Cypripedium acaule Ait.**
Common Name: *Pink Ladyslipper*
Habitat: acidic woods, often of oak and pine
State Status: **Common**
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: **All counties**
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: **5/15 - 6/20**
MA: **5/13 - 6/23 (7/11)**
Seymour's: **5/15 - 30**
Hudson/Champlin's: **5/21 - 6/13**



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

8

Botanical Name: **Cypripedium parviflorum
var. parviflorum**
Common Name: *Small Yellow Lady's-slipper,
Moccasin-flower, or Golden Slipper*
Habitat: rich woods
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 5/10 - 6/1
MA: 5/21 - 6/12
Seymour's: 5/11 - 6/18
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/14 - 6/11



Photo credit: Norm Boyer

9

Botanical Name: **Cypripedium parviflorum
var. pubescens**
Common Name: *Large Yellow Lady's-slipper,
Moccasin-flower, or
Golden Slipper, Whip-poor-will Shoes*
Habitat: **moist forests**
State Status: **SE**
Federal Status: **—**
Counties found in: **Providence**
Number of RI sites: **3**

Blooming Dates

RI: **5/10 - 6/1**
MA: **5/9 - 6/14**
Seymour's: **5/11 - 6/18**
Hudson/Champlin's: **5/14 - 6/11**



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

10

Botanical Name: **Dactylorhiza viridis viridis**
Common Name: *Bracted or Long-bracted Green Orchis, Frog-orchis*
Habitat: rich woods
State Status: ST
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 2

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 5/9 - 6/29
Seymour's: 5/19 - 30
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/13 - 6/7



Photo credit: Gil George

11

Botanical Name: **Epipactis helleborine (L.) Crantz**
(European origin)
Common Name: *Helleborine Orchid*
Habitat: weedy orchid of diverse habitats
State Status: Occasional
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: All counties
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/18 -
MA: 7/11 - 8/20
Seymour's: 7/14 - 8/?
Hudson/Champlin's: 8/1



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

12

Botanical Name: **Galearis spectabilis (L.) Raf.**
Common Name: *Showy Orchis*
Habitat: rich woods
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 1

Blooming Dates

RI: 5/18 - 24
MA: 5/9 - 6/18
Seymour's: 5/15- 5/30
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/8 - 6/1



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner



Photo credit: Norm Boyer

Botanical Name: **Goodyeara pubescens (Willd.) R. Br.**
 Common Name: *Downy Rattlesnake Plantain*
 Habitat: mixed woods
 State Status: Common
 Federal Status: —
 Counties found in: Kent, Newport, Providence, Washington
 Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/29 - 8/11
 MA: 7/19 - 9/10 (10/1)
 Seymour's: 7/25 - 8/27?
 Hudson/Champlin's: 8/1 - 8/20



Photo credit: Norm Boyer

14

Botanical Name: **Goodyeara tessellata Loddiges**
Common Name: *Checkered Rattlesnake Plantain*
Habitat: mixed woods
State Status: **Rare**
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: **Kent, Providence, Washington**
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: **7/25-8/27**
MA: —
Seymour's: **7/25-8/27**
Hudson/Champlin's: —



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

Botanical Name: **Isotria medeoloides (Pursh.) Raf**
Common Name: *Small Whorled Pogonia,*
Little Five-leaves
Habitat: hardwood forests
State Status: SE
Federal Status: FT
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 1

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 5/28 -(no date available)
Seymour's: 6/11 - 7/6?
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/28 - 6/16



Photo credits: Norm Boyer

16

Botanical Name: **Isotria verticillata (Willd.) Raf.**
Common Name: *Large Whorled Pogonia*
Habitat: dry acidic woods
State Status: Occasional
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Kent, Providence, Washington
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 5/15 - 30
MA: 5/16 - 6/18
Seymour's: 5/20 - 6/14
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/15 - 6/5



Photo credit: Gil George

17

Botanical Name: **Liparis lilifolia (L.) Rich. Ex. Lindl**
Common Name: *Lily-leaved or Large Twayblade*
Habitat: rich mesic woods
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 1

Blooming Dates

RI: 6/5/2022
MA: 5/25 - 6/30, 7/8
Seymour's: 6/8 - 7/6
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/29 - 7/8



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

Botanical Name: **Liparis loeselii (L.) Richard**
Common Name: *Yellow, Bog-, or Loesel's Twayblade, Fen-orchid*
Habitat: wet fields, swamps
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence; Kent
Number of RI sites: 2

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 6/10 - 7/15
Seymour's: 6/10 - 7/10
Hudson/Champlin's: 6/20 - 7/19



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

19

Botanical Name: **Listera cordata (L.) R. Br.**
Common Name: *Heart-leaved or Heartleaf Twayblade*
Habitat: fens and swamps
State Status: SH
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Washington
Number of RI sites: 0 (1897)

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 5/14- 6/11
Seymour's: 6/9- 8/11?
Hudson/Champlin's: —



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

Botanical Name: **Malaxis bayardii**
Common Name: *Bayard's Malaxis*
Habitat: dry woods and pine barrens
State Status: SH
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Washington
Number of RI sites: 0 (1909)

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: —
Seymour's: —
Hudson/Champlin's: —



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

Botanical Name: **Malaxis unifolia Michx.**
Common Name: *Green Adder's Mouth*
Habitat: swamps and bogs
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Washington
Number of RI sites: 1

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/27 - 28 - (3A)
MA: 7/2 - 8/24 (9/4)
Seymour's: 7/23 - 8/9
Hudson/Champlin's: 7/11 - 8/21



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

22

Botanical Name: **Platanthera aquilonis Sheviak**
Common Name: *Northern Green Orchid*
Habitat: **Moist, rich woods**
State Status: **SE**
Federal Status: **—**
Counties found in: **Providence**
Number of RI sites: **2**

Blooming Dates

RI: **7/8-7/14**
MA: **—**
Seymour's: **—**
Hudson/Champlin's: **—**



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

Botanical Name: **Platanthera blephariglottis
(Wildl.) Lindl.**
Common Name: *White-fringed Orchid*
Habitat: damp fields and bogs
State Status: ST
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Bristol; Kent; Washington
Number of RI sites: 4

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 7/14 - 8/28 (9/3)
Seymour's: 7/1 - 8/23
Hudson/Champlin's: 7/26 - 8/7



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

24

Botanical Name: **Platanthera ciliaris (L.) Lindl.**
Common Name: *Yellow Fringed Orchid or Orchis, Orange-plume*
Habitat: damp fields
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Washington
Number of RI sites: 2

Blooming Dates

RI: 8/20 - (B)
MA: 7/28 - 8/21
Seymour's: 7/? - 8/?
Hudson/Champlin's: 7/27 - 8/17



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

Botanical Name: **Platanthera clavellata**
(Michx.) Leur
Common Name: *Small Green Woodland Orchid*
Habitat: wet, usually acidic woods
State Status: Occasional
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Kent, Newport, Providence, Washington
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/11 - 8/5
MA: 7/15 - 8/26
Seymour's: 7/15 - 8/7
Hudson/Champlin's: 7/24 - 8/10



Photo credit: kbarton

26

Botanical Name: **Platanthera flava(L.)
var. herbiola (R. Br.) Luer**
Common Name: *Tubercled or Pale Green Orchis/Orchid*
Habitat: wet open areas and swamps
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Newport; Kent; Washington
Number of RI sites: 3

Blooming Dates

RI: 6/18 - 22 (7/13)
MA: —
Seymour's: 6/27 - 7/1
Hudson/Champlin's: 6/30 - 7/13



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

Botanical Name: **Platanthera grandiflora
(Bigel.) Lindl.**
Common Name: *Large Purple-fringed Orchid*
Habitat: moist woods and edges of streams
State Status: Rare
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Kent, Newport, Providence, Washington
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 6/9-28
MA: (6/4) 6/10 - 8/12
Seymour's: 6/15 - 7/1
Hudson/Champlin's: 6/7 - 7/12



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

28

Botanical Name: **Platanthera hookeri (Torr.) Lindl.**
Common Name: *Hooker's Orchid or Orchis*
Habitat: rich woods and coniferous forests
State Status: SH
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 0 (1983)

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 5/25 - 7/9
Seymour's: 5/17 - 6/?
Hudson/Champlin's: 5/31 - 6/20

No photo available.

29

Botanical Name: **Platanthera huronensis**
Common Name: *Leafy Northern Green Orchis,*
Tall Northern Bog-orchid
Habitat: swamps and bogs
State Status: ST
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 2

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 5/31 - 8/28
Seymour's: 6/25 - 7/1
Hudson/Champlin's: 7/2 - 9/5



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

30

Botanical Name: **Platanthera lacera var. lacera**
Common Name: *Ragged Fringed Orchid*
Habitat: swamps and also dry fields
State Status: SC
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Washington; Block Island
Number of RI sites: 3

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/11/2028
MA: (7/5) 7/13 - 9/10
Seymour's: 7/15 - 8/28
Hudson/Champlin's: 7/5 - 8/10

No photo available.

31

Botanical Name: **Platanthera macrophylla**
Common Name: *Large Round-leaved Orchid or Orchis*
Habitat: rich mesic to wet woods
State Status: SH
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 0 (1973)

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 6/19 - 8/6
Seymour's: 7/2 - 8/?
Hudson/Champlin's: —



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

Botanical Name: **Platyanthera orbiculata
(Pursh.) Lindl.**
Common Name: *Round-leaved Orchid*
Habitat: rich mesic to wet woods
State Status: SH
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 1 (1971)

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 6/22 - 8/18
Seymour's: 6/29 - 7/?
Hudson/Champlin's: 6/30 - 8/5



Photo credit: kbarton

33

Botanical Name: **Platanthera psychodes (L.) Lindl.**
Common Name: *Small Purple-fringed Orchid*
Habitat: swamps, edges of streams and rarely open wet areas as powerlines
State Status: SC
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence; Kent; Washington
Number of RI sites: 9

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/17 - 8/15
MA: 7/14 - 8/26 (9/4)
Seymour's: 7/12 - 8/14
Hudson/Champlin's: 7/23 - 8/16



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner

34

Botanical Name: ***Pogonia ophioglossoides* (L.) Juss.**
Common Name: *Rose Pogonia*
Habitat: wet fields, bogs and swamps
State Status: **Very Rare**
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: **Kent, Providence, Washington**
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 6/18 -26
MA: 6/4 - 7/27 (9/16-27)
Seymour's: 6/13 - 7/1?
Hudson/Champlin's: 6/7 - 7/29



Photo credit: kbarton

35

Botanical Name: **Spiranthes cernua (L.) Richard**
Common Name: *Nodding Ladies'-tresses*
Habitat: damp or dry open areas
State Status: Common
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Kent, Newport, Providence,
Washington
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: 8/26 - 9/23
MA: (8/8) 8/16 - 10/21
Seymour's: 8/24 - 9/23
Hudson/Champlin's: 9/1 - 9/20



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

36

Botanical Name: **Spiranthes lacera (Raf.) Raf.
var. lacera**
Common Name: *Northern Slender Ladies'-tresses*
Habitat: dry or moist fields
State Status: Rare
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: (7/5) 7/13 - 9/10
Seymour's: 7/5 - 8/?
Hudson/Champlin's: —



Photo credit: Anne B. Wagner



Photo credit: Francis Underwood

Botanical Name: **Spiranthes lacera (Raf.) Raf.
var. gracilis (Bigel.) Luer**

Common Name: *Southern Slender Ladies'-tresses*

Habitat: dry or moist fields

State Status: Rare

Federal Status: —

Counties found in: Newport, Providence, Washington

Number of RI sites: —

Blooming Dates

RI: —

MA: 8/12- 9/26

Seymour's: —

Hudson/Champlin's: 7/22 - 9/2

No photo available.

38

Botanical Name: **Spiranthes lucida**
(H.H. Eat.) Ames
Common Name: *Shining or Wide-leaved Ladies'-tresses*
Habitat: wet fields
State Status: SH
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Providence
Number of RI sites: 0 (1960)

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: (5/29-30) 6/10 - 7/17
Seymour's: 6/6- 7/19?
Hudson/Champlin's: 6/15



Seed head

Photo credits: Doug McGrady

39

Botanical Name: **Spiranthes ochroleuca
(Rydb.) Rydb.**
 Common Name: *Yellow Nodding Ladies-tresses*
 Habitat: dry woods, wet meadows
 State Status: Rare
 Federal Status: —
 Counties found in: Providence
 Number of RI sites: 1

Blooming Dates

RI: 10/23 (first found by D.McGrady)
 MA: (no date available) 9/3 - 10/7
 Seymour's: —
 Hudson/Champlin's: —

No photo available.

40

Botanical Name: **Spiranthes tuberosa Raf.**
Common Name: *Little Ladies'-tresses*
Habitat: dry fields and cemeteries
State Status: SE
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Washington
Number of RI sites: 2

Blooming Dates

RI: —
MA: 8/13 - 9/15
Seymour's: 8/14 - 9/13
Hudson/Champlin's: 8/19 - 9/13



Photo credit: kbarton

41

Botanical Name: **Spiranthes vernalis**
Engelm. & Gray
Common Name: *Spring Ladies'-tresses*
Habitat: dry fields and cemeteries
State Status: SC
Federal Status: —
Counties found in: Newport, Washington
Number of RI sites: 3

Blooming Dates

RI: 7/22 - 8/23
MA: 7/28 - 9/7 (9/22)
Seymour's: 8/1 - 9/?
Hudson/Champlin's: 8/8 - 9/2

Status Codes:

(FE) Federally Endangered

(FT) Federally Threatened

(SE) State Endangered- Native taxa in imminent danger of extirpation from Rhode Island. These taxa may meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. A taxon formerly considered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for listing as Federally endangered or threatened. These species were identified as C2 (Category 2) taxa for which information indicated that proposing to list under the Federal Endangered Species Act was potentially appropriate, but for which sufficient data on biological vulnerability and threat were not currently available to support proposed rules. The US Fish & Wildlife Service is currently not designating Category 2 species.

2. A taxon with 1 or 2 known or estimated total populations in the state.

3. A taxon apparently globally rare or threatened, estimated to occur at approximately 100 or fewer sites range-wide.

Plants listed as State Endangered are protected under the provisions of the Rhode Island State Endangered Species Act, Title 20 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island. This law states, in part (20-37-3):

“No person shall buy, sell, offer for sale, store, transport, import, export, or otherwise traffic in any animal or plant or any part of any animal or plant whether living or dead, processed, manufactured, preserved or raw (if) such animal or plant has been declared to be an endangered species by either the United States secretaries of the Interior or Commerce or the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management.”

(ST) State Threatened- Native taxa which are likely to become State Endangered in the future if current trends in habitat loss or other detrimental factors remain unchanged. In general, these taxa have 3-5 known or estimated populations and are especially vulnerable to habitat loss.

(SC) Species of Concern - Native taxa not considered to be State Endangered or Threatened at the present time, but are listed due to the various factors of rarity and/or vulnerability.

(SH) State Historical- Native taxa which have been documented for Rhode Island during the last 150 years but for which there are no extant populations. When known, the year of last documented occurrence is included.

**For Plants not on the
RI Rare Plant List**

C - Common

A - Abundant

F - Frequent

O - occasional

R - Rare

VR - Very Rare